

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the abstract with the following amended abstract:

Method and apparatus for communicating global link control words (LCW) between chips. A queue stores LCWs and ~~has in~~ has an input for receiving an LCW from a previous chip, and an output for outputting a stored LCW to a subsequent chip. A management circuit compares an incoming LCW with a previously stored LCW, and a combiner circuit combines the incoming LCW with a previously stored LCW and stores the combined LCW in the queue when the management circuit determines that the incoming LCW can be combined with the previously stored LCW.